

Message Text

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ORIGIN EB-11

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APPROVED BY EB/ AN: MHSTYLES

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY LISBON PRIORITY

INFO AMEMBASSY ANKARA

COMUSFORAZ

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E. O. 11652: N/ A

TAGS: ETRN, PO

SUBJECT: CIVAIR - PAN AM AT LAJES

REF: LISBON 1903, 1828, 1787

ANKARA FOR MEADOWS:

1. EMBTEL 1828 WAS MOST HELPFUL. WE CONCUR IN PROPOSAL
SEND ANOTHER NOTE TO GOP AND POINTS MADE BY EMBASSY COGENT.
ONLY ADDITIONAL POINT WE WOULD SUGGEST IS MAKE PASSING REF-
ERENCE TO FACT THAT PORTUGUESE HAVE IN EFFECT CONCEDED
US RIGHT TO SERVE MORE THAN ONE AIRPORT IN AZORES (SECOND
PARA MAY 16 NOTE - LISBON 1787). ON TACTICS, WE PREFER AT
THIS TIME TO REFRAIN FROM MAKING MORE SPECIFIC OUR PLANS
FOR COUNTERACTION, BELIEVING THAT POINT CAN BE BETTER AND
MORE CLEARLY MADE AND DISCUSSED DURING FORTHCOMING VISIT
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BY US AVIATION REPS (SEE PARA 2. F BELOW). HOWEVER, TO LAY (DOMESTIC) LEGAL GROUNDWORK FOR EVENTUAL USG ACTION, (SEE PARA 4, STATE 87326), A SPECIFIC STATEMENT WILL BE REQUIRED IN NOTE TO EFFECT THAT PORTUGUESE DENYING RIGHTS UNDER THE AGREEMENT OVER THE OBJECTIONS OF THE USG.

2. WE THUS PROPOSE THAT EMBASSY REPLY ASAP TO MAY 16 NOTE ALONG FOLLOWING LINES (PLEASE AIR POUCH TO EB/ OA/ AN COPIES OF EACH OF THE NOTES SENT AND RECEIVED THIS YEAR ON LAJES ISSUE):

A. .. AND HAS TAKEN NOTE OF THE POINTS MADE IN THE MINISTRY' S NOTE OF MAY 16. BASED ON RECENT PERSONAL OBSERVATION AND DISCUSSION WITH OFFICIALS AT LAJES AIRPORT BY EMBASSY OFFICERS, IT IS NOT POSSIBLE FOR THE EMBASSY TO CONCUR THAT THE EXISTING FACILITIES AT LAJES ARE NOT ADEQUATE TO PERMIT THE MODEST INCREASE IN COMMERCIAL OPERATIONS WHICH THE PROPOSED PAN AMERICAN SERVICE WOULD ENTAIL. THE LAJES FACILITIES FOR LANDING, PARKING AND REFUELING ARE CAPABLE OF HANDLING CONSIDERABLY MORE AIRCRAFT THAN THE PRESENT NUMBER USING THE AIRPORT. THE SPACE AVAILABLE IN THE TERMINAL FOR COMMERCIAL OPERATIONS HAS RECENTLY BEEN INCREASED AND WILL BE FURTHER ENLARGED BY MID- JULY.

B. CONCERNING THE DOUBTS EXPRESSED IN THE MINISTRY' S NOTE ABOUT THE COMPETITIVE DISADVANTAGE UNDER WHICH THE US DESIGNATED AIRLINES ARE PLACED BECAUSE OF TAP' S UTILIZATION OF LAJES AIRPORT, THE SIGNIFICANT DIFFERENCE IN THE SIZE OF THE MARKETS SERVED BY THE LAJES AND THE SANTA MARIA AIRPORTS ALONE IS STRONG EVIDENCE SUPPORTING THE US CLAIM. CONCERNING THE ACTUAL DIVERSION WHICH PAN AMERICAN HAS EXPERIENCED AS A RESULT OF TAP' S SERVICE THROUGH LAJES, IT IS PERHAPS SUFFICIENT TO NOTE THAT IN 1972 PAN AMERICAN CARRIED PRACTICALLY NO MORE PASSENGERS BETWEEN BOSTON AND SANTA MARIA THAN IT DID IN 1970, SHOWING A MERE FOUR PERCENT GROWTH OVER THE THREE- YEAR PERIOD.

C. LASTLY, THE MINISTRY' S STATEMENT THAT IT WAS THE GOVERNMENT OF PORTUGAL WHICH OBLIGED TAP TO STOP AT LAJES AIRPORT IS NOT RELEVANT TO THE ISSUE IN QUESTION, SINCE THE RIGHT OF US DESIGNATED AIRLINES TO SERVE THE AZORES ON THE US ROUTES DESCRIBED IN SECTION I. A. OF THE ANNEX TO LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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THE US- PORTUGAL AIR TRANSPORT AGREEMENT DEPENDS ONLY ON THE FACT THAT A PORTUGUESE AIRLINE IS CONDUCTING COMMERCIAL SERVICE AT SUCH AN AIRPORT, NOT THE REASON WHY SUCH SERVICE IS BEING CONDUCTED.

D. AS THE EMBASSY POINTED OUT IN ITS NOTE DATED MAY 9, CONTINUING DELAYS IN THE RESOLUTION OF THIS ISSUE SERVE ONLY TO INCREASE THE DIFFICULTIES EXPERIENCED BY THE

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